

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 4, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The aforesaid Si alloys and Sn alloys and, in addition, Al alloys are negative electrode active materials exhibiting high charge and discharge capacities. However, they have the drawback that they incur large changes in volume with alternate repetition of charging and discharging and, as a result, undergo cracking and pulverizing and finally fall off the current collector. To address this problem, techniques for preparing a negative electrode, of which the active material is prevented from falling off, have been proposed, in which a mixture of a negative electrode active material containing Si or an Si alloy and an electro-conductive metal powder is applied to a conductive metal foil, followed by sintering in a non-oxidative atmosphere (see JP-A-11-339777, JP-A-2000-12089, ~~JP-A-2001-254261~~, and JP-A-2002-260637). It has also been proposed to prevent fall-off of a negative electrode active material by forming a thin film of Si on a current collector with good adhesion by plasma-enhanced CVD or sputtering (see JP-A-2000-18499). Moreover, extensive studies have been devoted to development of various Sn- or Si-based intermetallic compounds (see JP-A-10-312804, JP-A-2001-243946, and JP-2001-307723). Even with these techniques, however, it is still impossible to perfectly prevent fall-off of the negative electrode active

material from the current collector as a result of cracking and pulverizing of the active material, accompanying charge and discharge of a secondary battery.--